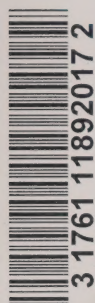


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The Public Library in Ontario

A Handbook for its Establishment

Copies of this pamphlet and of the *Public Libraries Act* and the *Public Libraries Regulations* may be obtained free from the Director of Public Library Service, Department of Education, 206 Huron St., Toronto. The 16 mm. films *Library on Wheels* and *The Books Drive On* may also be secured on loan.

First edition 1944.
Second edition 1946.
Third edition 1950

The Public Library

Why You Need It
How to Start It
How to Keep it Going

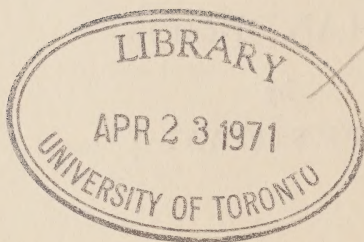
A HANDBOOK

by

ANGUS MOWAT

Public Libraries Branch
Ontario Department of Education
1950

*A community without a public library is like
a farm without a well.*



WHY HAVE A LIBRARY?

There is no culture that is static. It seems to be a law of peoples as well as of nature that nothing is static. All the things that we have, or that we believe in, or that we strive to hold to, are in a state of change. Their values are constantly altering. A culture may be growing or it may be declining—many have declined and perished—or it may be passing through one of the eras of catastrophe that have wrecked whole civilizations.

And our Canadian culture, our society, is no exception. It is changing, and rapidly. We may believe that it is growing, but we may not believe that it is growing in security. It is growing among the hazards and dangers to which all western culture has been exposed continuously since 1914.

This is no time for complacency or for leaving well enough alone, and there is no need to tell anybody so. Rather, it's a time when it's as plain as a topsail that if our young democracy is to do its changing in the right direction, if it is to grow, mature, perhaps even if it is to survive at all, then the time is upon us when every man jack of us who is capable of doing so must pull his weight, must make some kind of contribution to the intelligent solution of the problems with which we are faced.

We know perfectly well that the collapse of nazi Germany did not pitchfork us into any Utopian

dreamland; and I think most of us know, also, that the success or failure in our continuing battle for the survival of democracy will depend chiefly upon the enlightenment of the democratic peoples and upon the sincerity and vitality of their ideas. This means the state of their education. There is, therefore, an unescapable responsibility placed upon us, as citizens, to grow in our sincerity and our vitality by continuing to grow in our knowledge and our ideas—not to mention our ideals—through the continuation of this process that we call education.

I am saying plainly that we must make education, and particularly adult education, succeed in Canada; and I am saying bluntly that we haven't taken it very seriously thus far. Not adult education at any rate. Perhaps we had better get on with that job while time remains.

But, however we may try, there can be no such thing as adult education—and very little of any other kind—unless there is provided for the members of every community a reservoir of information and intellectual stimulus upon which the individual can draw—man, woman, and child. There can be no effective education, in other words, without books—books that are *used*—and there can be no adequate source of books for everybody without libraries.

Good libraries, dynamic libraries, not stagnant ones.

You might as well try to use a fire-engine without water as try to achieve a reasonable and effective state of education in yourself, or in your community, without the backing of a good library.

This is very elementary reasoning but we in Canada have been a long time seeing the point. Fortunately we are waking up now and, more fortunately, before it is too late.

The good library functions today according to a well-defined process, the principal results of which are,—

1—To supply carefully selected and attractive books for the use of children of school age, or younger. Such books may be provided directly from the library or through classroom loans, or both. They do not include “must” or text books but are selected, rather, with a view to stimulating the child’s taste for good reading. Exposing him to good reading, not forcing the issue. A good public library is in the front line in the war on comics and Hollywood and such-like druggers.

2—To provide training, not only in the use of books but also in the use of the library.

3—To follow through in the development from childhood to youth, and from youth into maturity. And to continue in the service to the individual right through his mature years.

4—Finally, to make itself invaluable to the community as the chief, almost the sole, source of material for the carrying out of adult education programmes, whether they take the form of citizens’ forum groups, or farm forums, or organized courses of any kind; or whether it is simply a matter of individual reading of an interesting and enlightening nature.

This is the basic object of all public library service. It is this which makes the public library an essential

sinew in the life of every community that is vigorous and mature.

There were no free public libraries, as we know them, in nazi Germany. There were none in fascist Italy. There aren't any of our kind—the FREE kind—in the Soviet Union.

ESTABLISHMENT

The establishment and maintenance of public libraries is provided for by The Public Libraries Act—*Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1937, Chapter 283*. A copy of the *Act* and of the *Regulations* made under it will be sent to any interested person on request.

The *Act* provides for,—

The establishment of

FREE PUBLIC LIBRARIES

ASSOCIATION LIBRARIES

COUNTY LIBRARY CO-OPERATIVES

The *Regulations* cover the certification of librarians and the items under such legislative grants are paid.

THE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The free public library belongs to the community and is supported by the community, through tax-levy, just as the school, fire, police, and other services are

supported. This is the normal and intelligent practice in a democracy. It is frankly to be admitted that not all public libraries are successful in carrying out their functions; but the free type of library has an infinitely better chance of success than the association can ever hope to have. This is a matter of experience. For this reason it is strongly urged that the free library be established wherever possible. The steps by which a free library is established are as follows:

1—Organize a committee to plan a campaign of information. See that the people who live in the community are thoroughly enlightened as to what a free library is, and how necessary it is to the present and future development, not only of your own small centre but of the province and the country as well. Take the whole community into your confidence in this campaign and do not neglect to enlist the active support of *all* organized groups, church and secular.

2—Ask your council to pass a by-law establishing the library. Council has power to do this without reference to a vote.

3—If council does not care to accept responsibility for this act without consent of the electors, form a committee to circulate a petition in the municipality. *The wording of the petition will be found on page 29 of the Public Libraries Act, as sent to you.* The petition must bear the signatures of thirty electors in a village or of sixty in a town. 1373

4—Present this completed petition to your council. Council is then required under Sections 4 and 5 of the *Act* to submit the question to the electors. The form of the by-law will be found on page 29 of your copy of the *Act*. 1373

5—In police villages, school sections and township school areas the procedure is somewhat different and is explained in Sections 6 and 8 of the *Act*.

6—When the question receives the assent of a majority of the electors—and *this means all electors, not only those who may vote on a money by-law*—the by-law will be given its final reading and the library established. *Read Section 7 of the Act*, where the procedure is plainly set forth. I may add here that I have only once known a public library by-law to be defeated, and that was under unusual circumstances.

7—In places where there is already an association library, the association members may ask council to take it over and establish it as a free public library. If council agrees to do so, the new board is appointed under *Part I of the Act (Sections 14-21)* and there is no need to take round the petition or bring the question to a vote. You will find this explained in *Section 10 of the Act*. But where this simple method is adopted, I suggest that you do not neglect your campaign of information. This is the people's business and they must be told what it is all about.

8—The manner of appointment, the duties and the powers of a public library board, which is a corporate body, are covered in *Sections 13-27 of the Act*. These sections should be studied with care by the appointing bodies and by the appointees. It is a sad thing to say, but it is true, that there are still a good many members of library boards who do not know what their job is or by what authority they are carrying it on. They are like angels who do not know what their wings are for; or they are like . . . oh well . . .

9—So, having got your by-law passed, what then does your new board do for money to run your library

with? Does it hide its head under its wing, poor thing? Or does it go cringing and grovelling to council, with its hat in its hand, begging for a few fifty-cent pieces to buy a few cheap books with?

Well, some do.

And that kind of board gets just exactly nowhere; and the people in the community who are looking to it for effective book service get merely the pale ghost of a service. It isn't good enough! It's better to have no library at all than a moribund starveling.

If, on the other hand, your board has on it people of vision, character and energy, they will carry out their duties as the *Act* empowers them to. The very first thing they will do is visit some other, successful libraries and see what makes them tick. They will present their estimates for the year and present them—neither fearfully nor truculently, but firmly and in a business-like way, and with an intelligent reason for the presence of each item—to council. Council may pass the estimates in toto, or it may reduce them to an amount which will mean a tax-levy of *not less than fifty cents per capita*. But council has no control over the individual items of the budget. It cannot, in other words, take over the functions of the library board and say, "Deduct so much from the librarian's salary and add it to book purchases." On the other hand councils may, and intelligent councils do—and councils are doing it more and more every year—pass the library budget to an amount that will enable the library to function properly. The *Act* no longer limits the judgement of council in this respect. It may levy as much as it sees fit. Some levy as much as \$1.50 per capita. The secret of success lies in co-operation, knowledge of the job, and the intelligent placing of

the budget before council. The secret of failure lies in timidity, ignorance of the job, and backbiting antagonism.

Good relations with council and the resulting adequate support of the library by council constitute the first duty of a public library board.

The least support upon which any library can hope to function successfully is a tax-levy of 75¢ per capita; and this for the very minimum of efficiency. Real efficiency demands at least \$1.00 per capita. The library board, therefore, should always base its estimates for the annual budget on the \$1.00 per capita scale, even though council may not be prepared, immediately, to provide this amount to the full. *Read Sections 38 and 39 of the Act.*

40 41

10—Next comes the matter of quarters. It is a very fine thing to put up a properly designed building in which a competent architect builds around the library function and does not, as used to be the case, put up a building and then try to crowd the library function into it any old way at all. But while your library is finding its feet and boring its way into the heart of the community life, it will probably have to be content for a time with rented quarters. In any case there are some essentials such as,—

- (a) Shelving for the books. You do not, as some people still seem to think, need to build your shelving of quarter-cut oak; but you do need a proper design, with adjustable shelves, that will let people see the books and get at them without lying on their stomachs or climbing on high ladders. You will need *much more* shelf space than you think you will. Shelves become crowded very

soon. Good clear pine, if you happen to have a couple of well-seasoned pine trees standing in the neighbourhood, or good plywood if you haven't—well splashed about with bright paint, gives a pleasanter gleam to the place than all the varnished wood there ever was.

- (b) It goes without saying that the place must be comfortably heated in winter and if possible made cool in summer. Insulation and awnings sometimes work wonders in this respect.
- (c) The library quarters must be properly lighted. There are still far too many libraries in which only a bat or a mole could find its way around in comfort. Very few human beings can see at all well in the dark, and the board which complacently lets them go on trying is certainly not on its job. And in this connection, please do not write to the director of libraries and ask him how to light your building. He doesn't know. Go to the Hydro. Lighting is their business. They do know.
- (d) A work room. Yes, a *work* room! It's simply silly to ask people to feel at home in a library when they have to wade knee-deep through paste-pots, cartons, discarded books, clippings, records, mops, newspaper files and dozens of other things. Also, it is silly to expect a librarian to do efficient work without an efficiently planned work room. Remember that while the librarian has to charge and discharge books she also has 1042 other important things to do besides. A work room for her, by all means.
- (e) If there is a staff then provide the members with

a comfortable and attractive staff room. Common decency demands it.

- (f) And last of the essentials, whatever you do, don't let your library achieve that dismal, repellent, institutional look—a sort of cross between a run-down funeral home and a dirty railway coach—which is so often thought conducive to intellectual piety. It's conducive to nothing except keeping people out of the place. Hang pretty curtains at the windows, some bright prints on the walls—not necessarily advertisements for steamship companies—buy a few comfortable chairs for browsers, refrain from putting up fly-specked signs telling people where to spit and what to do with their hats and not to say a word. The library isn't a police court, it's a place to be happy in. A successful librarian of my acquaintance once hit the nail on the head when she wrote,—

The girls who work in our library are happy and interesting people—and interested in people—and we talk out loud in the library and laugh out loud when anything funny happens, and people seem to like the atmosphere—and the colour of the walls.

II—*Tools.* Even in the smallest library your librarian will need some few simple tools of the trade. As a bare minimum she will have to be provided with the following:

- (a) *Pictorial Library Primer.* No person who has not taken a course at a library school can possibly do without it. We will send a copy free to any library established in the province.

- (b) *Book-cards, shelf-list cards, daters, etc.* These things are all part of the normal equipment in a modern library, but don't try to order them until your librarian has thoroughly studied the primer mentioned above. Then write to the library supply houses for catalogues. Most libraries buy stationery supplies from Lowe-Martin Co. (59 Victoria St., Toronto) or from Ryerson Press (299 Queen St. W., Toronto).
- (c) *Dewey Decimal System of Classification* (abridged). This can be bought from Ryerson Press, 299 Queen St. W., Toronto, for \$6.00. In order to keep your new library from growing into a chaotic hodge-podge in which nobody can ever find what they want, some system of classifying the books is needed. The Dewey system is in general use in the public libraries of the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States; and in its simplest form (suitable for the small library) is extremely easy to use. But its application does require some study and your librarian should not even open her *Dewey* until she has mastered the instructions in *Pictorial Library Primer*.
- (d) *Buying Lists of Books for Small Libraries*. This is published by the American Library Association, 50 East Huron, Chicago 11. Price \$2.25. While the emphasis is on books suitable for U.S. libraries, at least three-quarters of the titles recommended are standard wherever English is read.
- (e) *Basic Reference Books*. Also from the A.L.A. at \$4.25
- (f) *Books for Boys and Girls*. This list is prepared by the staff of Boys' and Girls' House, Toronto

Public Library, and can be bought from Ryerson Press for \$3.50. No library can do without it. Use it. The Toronto Public Library has also issued a mimeographed supplement which may be obtained from Boys' and Girls' House.

And whatever mistakes you may make in your book-selection (and you will make many—everybody does) never let anybody persuade you to buy, or accept as a gift, any child's book that has not been tried, proved and passed upon by a librarian trained and qualified in work with children. The knowledge of children's literature is her special business and she has given it very special study.

And above all else, eschew from the very beginning any temptation you may feel to succumb to those dreadful "series" things, the Bobbsey Twins and the Airplane Boys and all the rest of that rubbishy lot. This kind of publication is drivel. If you admit it to your shelves you begin to defeat your own ends from the very start. It seems that in practically every community there is at least one well-meaning soul who has stored bushels of these "series" in an attic for years and who, wishing to be helpful, digs it out when the new library is formed in order to "help fill the shelves." Well, it is your duty to be firm in this, as in your critical attitude towards all proffered gifts. Better the shelves stay empty than be cluttered up with useless titles.

- (g) *By Way of Introduction*. A first-class recreational reading list for young people of high-school age. Books are grouped by reading interests and briefly annotated. Available from the A.L.A. at \$1.25.

(h) *Ontario Library Review*. This is a quarterly periodical issued by the Public Libraries Branch, Department of Education. It is published in the interest of better library service to the people and is addressed to librarians and library trustees of the province. In addition to many articles of general interest on library matters, it provides lists of current adult books, books for boys and girls of high-school age, books for children, and books on special and timely topics. The cost of this publication for group subscriptions to library boards is \$1.00 per year. For individuals it is 25¢ per year.

BOOK SELECTION AND BUYING

In a short pamphlet such as this it is impossible to offer much detail concerning this most important subject. I may say, however, that the book-selection methods of some libraries—and not always the smallest libraries either—are shocking. In some cases books are bought, apparently, because:

- (a) They are cheap.
- (b) They are the kind some particular library board member likes.
- (c) They will be popular, whether or not they are any good.
- (d) They are highly advertised.

In fact, I have seen books bought for every reason under the sun except *the one valid one*, that they contain matter of intrinsic value between their covers.

The chief responsibility for book-selection should rest with the librarian, who is the only person in a position to be thoroughly familiar with the library stock, where the weaknesses lie in the library shelves, the tastes and requirements of the readers, and in whose hands she can place books of different types so that they will do the most good. Naturally, the librarian will have help in her selection from her board and also from the people who use the library, but the chief responsibility should be hers. She alone, making it her day-by-day job, will best know how to relate the book-stock and its needs to the community and its needs.

In speaking about books for boys and girls I cautioned you against putting in "series." Likewise, in selecting your adult fiction (some of which isn't very adult) I advise you most urgently to keep away from tripe. Tripe? Well, it is usually pretty obvious to people who are discriminating readers. This kind of thing, for example. A writer who makes an early "hit" may go on for the rest of a long life turning out the same book over and over again. May, and often does. He changes the names of the people and he alters the action a little bit and he moves the scene from place to place. But it remains the selfsame book nevertheless. It becomes not reading but mental dope, a soporific. It is tripe. It grows in rows.

This kind of "writing" applies chiefly to the novel. Now, I am not decrying the use of fiction. That would be a silly thing to do, since many of the greatest contributions to literature have been in this form. Thoughtful, or informative, or provoking, or stimulating novels for the public library, yes by all means; but the purely commercial, quick-grab kind of thing that is mill-run by the tens of thousands every year,

no! We have no place for it. It is wholly detrimental to our job. Leave it to the lending libraries if they want it. And be warned by the experience of others. If you once start providing this mill-run kind of fiction you are stuck with it. It has its devotees, worse luck, and they are inclined to be demanding.

It is easy enough to talk in general terms about what not to buy for the library. It is more difficult, and in a short pamphlet impossible, to give explicit suggestions about the actual titles that ought to be bought. If your librarian has had training, however, such as you will find mentioned in the following section, this difficult task becomes simplified. In a small library she cannot have all the book-selection tools that are used as aids in a larger one; but she can at least have the guides I have already spoken of, which she will use for basic selection. For current publications she will have to depend chiefly upon the reviews of new books as presented by the weekly editions of the better newspapers and, particularly, upon those offered by the monthly and weekly periodicals devoted to the survey of contemporary literature.

The actual buying of the book selected is usually done by the small library in one, or sometimes all, of the following ways.

- (a) A general order is made up and sent in to one of the publishers' wholesale houses for collection.
- (b) A book, or perhaps several books, are ordered directly from the firm which published them and in whose catalogue they are to be found.
- (c) The library order is placed through a local book-seller. In places where the local book-store is a good one, and the discount offered is adequate,

this sometimes proves to be a very satisfactory method. One advantage is that the book-seller is often in a position to offer valuable advice as to the suitability of a title.

- (d) In some cases, where there is a county library, books are bought by it for the local libraries when requested. In one instance the county library actually stocks current and general publications from which the local librarians and book committees may make their selection and take immediate delivery.

COURSES OF TRAINING

Whether you choose to regard it as profession or trade, librarianship is, in any event, a job which demands many things from those who hope to achieve success. Among these is the mastery of the techniques required. A full year's course is offered to university graduates by the Library School of the University of Toronto. This course leads to the degree of Bachelor of Library Science and the holders of this degree are entitled to full certification in librarianship from the Department of Education. They may be said to be fully qualified librarians.

Every place with a population of 3500 or more should aim, eventually, to have a fully qualified librarian in charge of its public library.

Since 1948, and for the benefit of the smaller places, Library School has been offering a one-month course in elementary librarianship to people employed

in libraries in places of less than 3500 population. Successful candidates in this course are granted a Class E certificate of librarianship by the Department of Education. Many librarians from the smaller places have already availed themselves of this offer and, as a result, there has been a marked improvement in the quality of the librarianship found in the small communities.

There is no longer any excuse for the library which continues to fumble and stumble and guess in the dark. Training—at least elementary training—is now available to all, in such essential techniques as book-selection, cataloguing, classification, charging-systems, book-repair, records, ordering, reference work and all the other items which go to make up the background—I repeat *background*—of successful public library practice.

THE LIBRARIAN

I am sorry to have to say this, and it is an appalling thing to have to say at this late day, but the plain fact is that in some quarters—many quarters—it is still felt that librarianship is a thing which does not require training, skill, personality, energy, intelligence, humour, or any other desirable human characteristic other than the ability to walk as far as the library once in a while and unlock the door. Many trustees still seem to think that the best way to select a librarian is to pick up some unfortunate person who is a bit infirm, mentally and physically, and likely to become a charge on public charity unless given a nice little easy, restful, pittance job—like the library.

This kills two birds with one stone. No, three, because it kills the library too.

Let's look at it this way. The internal combustion motor, as nearly everybody knows, does not run very well with cracked and worn out spark-plugs. And as far as your library is concerned you must get it clearly fixed in your mind that *your librarian is the spark-plug without which it simply will not work*. She must have a knowledge of books. She must like books and like people and be the kind of person who takes pleasure in bringing books and people together. She must be able to win people's confidence. She must be given and be able to accept responsibility.

She must, in short, have personality, and the right kind of personality to apply the necessary salesmanship to her job. That's what it is. Salesmanship. And I can assure you that neither your timid mouse nor your bossy, managing kind of person has ever been a successful public librarian. Not one. Though many of both kinds have had a go at it.

And when you are establishing a library the time to appoint the librarian is, *first*. Before you have bought a book or got a shelf to put it on. The librarian is the most important factor in the success or failure of your library venture. The "open" hours of the library are not the librarian's working hours. They are less than half of them. In a small library her employment, unfortunately, will probably be on a part-time basis; but do not be niggardly in the matter of her pay on that account. Make it worth her while to do the job well and, if she does not and cannot, or will not, get somebody else who can and will, just as you would do in any other business.

THE LIBRARY BOARD

Something has already been said about the responsibility of the library board in establishing co-operative relations with council and, by making the aims and need of library service clear to council, and securing a tax-levy which will be sufficient to enable the public book service to function, not starve in its tracks.

For the internal management of the library, its stock, building, staff and service—for all of which the board and the board alone is responsible—it is probably sufficient to say that successful boards occupy in relation to public book business a position exactly parallel to the board of directors of a successful mercantile business. The board decides upon policies; and, since the members have other matters to attend to, they employ a manager and where necessary a staff to see that their policies are carried out. The manager in this case is the librarian, who is responsible to the board.

It has been my experience that library boards very quickly develop habits; and there are two bad habits against which I would warn all new trustees. First, there is the habit of meddling in details of interior management and messing them all up. Second, there is the equally bad habit of going to the other extreme and paying no attention at all to what goes on in the library. Poor service is the result in either case. Being a member of a library board, like being a librarian, also demands the application of time, intelligence, energy and vision; and it often demands as well a great deal of tact, personal courage and backbone. Appointment to a library board is an honour. Do not make it an empty one.

Another thing that is most important for a board and for the individual trustee to keep in mind, is the relation which they bear to other communities and to library service generally. The libraries of the province, individually managed though they are, are all working in one service, the same service. They are not working in cells or in watertight compartments. They are pooling their experiences and their knowledge. In many cases they are even pooling their resources. Keen board members take every opportunity to visit other libraries (and encourage their librarians to do the same) observing their failures, marking and emulating their successes. They find time to attend the trustees' institutes held by the Department of Education. They do not neglect their memberships in the Canadian and Ontario Library Associations, those bodies which have been so largely responsible for the development of public library service in this province and in the dominion, and to which every trustee and every librarian in this province owes the debt of a grateful and sincere allegiance.

No, it isn't an empty honour. It's an important public service—and a toughish kind of job as well.

THE ASSOCIATION LIBRARY

Unlike the free public library, the association—which is dealt with in *Part II of the Act*—does not receive municipal tax support but depends for its income chiefly upon membership fees and any small grants it can pick up. The principle is badly out of date and the association library is not often successful, simply because there is never enough money in the treasury to make it tick. Experience seems to have

shown that the establishment of an association library is good business only in very small communities in a county in which there is a successful county library, and where the new association library is designed to be a branch of the county library, wholly dependent upon the county library for its book supply.

Apart from this, however, there are some places in which it is found difficult to establish a free public library for various reasons, and in which it may be advisable to start with an association in the hope of having it transferred to the free list later on. But be warned. Scores have started with this object in view but year after year has rolled by and the change has never been made.

Practically everything I have said in the earlier pages about the free library applies with equal force to the association, except the manner in which it is established and supported. The method of establishment is as follows, and you will find it clearly set out in *Part II of the Act, beginning on page 17. 1362.*

1—Ten persons agree among themselves to establish an association library.

2—They send to the Public Libraries Branch for the declaration form, complete both copies, file one copy with the Registrar of Deeds for the county, and return the other to the Public Libraries Branch.

3—The signers of this declaration are the charter members of the association. As many members as possible should be added. Voting members must be at least 21 years old.

4—The members appoint a board of management for the general supervision of the library. This board

must consist of not fewer than five and not more than nine members.

5—The membership must be made up of individuals, not families, and the association may charge any annual fee it chooses.

6—The board of management must elect one of its members as chairman and must appoint a secretary and a treasurer—or one person may act as secretary-treasurer—and a librarian.

NOT three or four librarians!

The librarian should ^{not} be a member of the board, but it is the usual practice to make her secretary-treasurer.

7—Before the 15th of March in each year the board must furnish the Department of Education with an annual report, and on forms which are supplied for the purpose. The yearly legislative grants are computed from the information supplied in these annual reports.

This is a very simple way of setting up a library, at least on paper. "But then," somebody will ask, "where do the books come from?" Well, it's hard to say. This is where the whole principle of the thing is wrong and, as I have said, out of date. The free library takes its budget to council, receives its appropriation (NOT GRANT) buys books and takes in members. The association library, on the other hand, depends on membership fees for its income. So it has to go out and canvass for members before it has any books—before it has anything to offer. You see the difficulty.

THE COUNTY LIBRARY CO-OPERATIVE

There is one great obstacle that besets the way of all small libraries, free or association, and it always has and it always will. It is their smallness. The smallness of their budgets in the first place and the comparative fewness of the people served in the second. Let's look at it from the point of view of one book. Never mind the title but let's say it is an important book, and expensive. Maybe \$25.00. The Toronto Public Library can buy that important book and is justified in buying it for two reasons:

- (a) It has the money.
- (b) It has a sufficient number of readers to make good use of it.

But the small library cannot buy it and is not justified in making the effort for two reasons:

- (a) It hasn't enough money.
- (b) It hasn't enough borrowers to make good use of it. It would be read by a few, then it would stand on the shelves until something newer on the same subject came along, leaving it out-dated.

Budget and population—they go hand-in-hand to the detriment of the small library and its service to its readers.

The County Library Co-operative—or just the County Library as it is usually called—aims to overcome much of this difficulty; and, as far as it has gone in the 12 counties in which it now operates, this aim is coming closer and closer to achievement each year.

This is what the county library does.

1—Under the competent selection of a qualified librarian it buys books, good books, often the most expensive books, which are the property of the whole county.

2—These books are divided into equal lots and each lot is deposited with one of the libraries in the county. At the end of three months the lots are exchanged. This means that each library in the county receives a blood-transfusion every three months. Each lot contains adult non-fiction books, fiction and children's books.

3—Where there is no library in a community the county library seeks to promote the establishment of one.

4—Where a community is too small to support any kind of library, the county library will set up a deposit of books in the hands of some responsible organization, a church group, a branch of the W.I., Farm Forum, etc.

5—Eventually (*but our county libraries are young, and this is only just beginning in Ontario*) a library-on-wheels or, as we call it, a bookmobile, will travel the county and township roads on a regular schedule—winter and summer—finally bringing book service within reach of all.

6—The county library serves rural schools, usually making the exchange more frequently than exchanges are made among the libraries. Only children's books are supplied in the schools, of course.

This service *is in addition* to any library service which may already exist in the county. The individual library retains its individuality and remains under its present management as established by the Public

Libraries Act. The county library, therefore, is an agent for the promotion of library service where there is none and for the stimulation and assistance of library service already established. The individual libraries do not belong to the county library and it does not belong to them. It belongs to the whole county. It serves the whole county.

Considering the large proportion of our people who live in small villages and on farms and considering the poor quality—or utter lack—of the book service that has been available to them; and looking over the gratifying success that is being achieved by the 12 county libraries now in operation, there is not a shadow of a doubt in my mind about the outcome. This is the most important single development that has taken place in the library service in the province in the last fifty years.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNTY LIBRARY

A county library co-operative is established under the authority of *Part II A of the Public Libraries Act*, page ¹³⁸⁷ 22. At least half the established libraries in a county petition the County Council to pass a by-law establishing a county library co-operative. Council may thereupon pass the by-law. But this is not mandatory and Council need not grant the petition. The decision is left to the judgement of Council.

If Council does pass the by-law, it then appoints the county library board. The board consists of seven; the Warden—three councillors—three others who may or may not be councillors, and who are usually chosen from among the library trustees in the individual libraries.

FINANCE

The county library has three main sources of income:

1—Membership fees, which so far have never been higher than \$25 a year for each member library or school.

2—An annual grant from County Council.

3—An annual grant from the Department of Education.

Grants from County Councils at the time of writing run from about \$3000 to \$5000 a year. The Department of Education matches the County Council grant dollar-for-dollar up to \$4000 a year. In addition to this the Department pays a grant of \$1000 a year where a fully qualified librarian is employed, and \$500 a year on the certificates of fully qualified assistant librarians.

One county library which has been operating since 1940 issued 105,000 books during 1949. Another, which has been running only three years, loaned 82,000. *These are in addition to* the books owned by the local libraries and issued by them. The figures don't seem to need any comment.

The treatment of this vigorous and significant development in library service has of necessity been brief in this handbook. But I am always happy to discuss it in fuller detail with interested groups, either by correspondence or, better still, in person.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES

A travelling, or box, library system is operated by the Department of Education. It serves small libraries,

rural schools and responsible organizations such as the Women's Institute, Federation of Agriculture groups, study clubs, church clubs, etc. Through this system you can secure the loan of:

1—A box of about fifty books made up of general reading for adults and children.

2—A box containing selected books for pupils in elementary schools *or* students in secondary schools.

The borrower pays carriage charges one way. Both kinds of boxes may be borrowed at the same time. It is only fair to point out that the resources of this service are heavily taxed and that, since all orders cannot be filled the moment they are received, applications from the northern districts, where the establishment of local library service is more difficult than in old Ontario, receive priority. Also, where there is a county library, people requiring this kind of book service should apply there before coming to the Department of Education. Use your own resources first and let us give the less-privileged a chance.

REGULATIONS FOR LEGISLATIVE GRANTS

People who are interested in the establishment of a public library should make it their first duty to acquaint themselves with the *Public Libraries Act* and the *Regulations—Public Libraries*. Both are quite short and easily understood even by those who haven't had the benefit of Osgoode Hall. The *Act* is your authority, charter, constitution and I hope, ever-present help in time of trouble. But it is the *Regulations* we are talking about now. These *Regulations* are made under the authority of the *Act* and have all

the power of law. They deal with a number of things that are of the greatest importance to library service, but chiefly they deal with the certification of librarians and the legislative grants that may be paid each year to the libraries.

I may add that the present *Regulations* date only from 1946. They mark an important year. They mark the year in which the resurgence of a dynamic, vigorous library service in this province began.

First there is the matter of certification of librarian. Please let me make it clear. Certification is not compulsory. The board is still free to employ whom it likes. The *Regulations* merely serve to encourage the employment of people who have been trained for the job.

There are four classes of certificate now valid in Ontario. *The first, Class A*, is granted to those who hold a bachelor's degree from a university and a master's degree from an approved library school, or vice versa. This certificate carries an annual grant under the *Regulations* of \$600.

The Class B certificate requires a bachelor's degree from a university and a bachelor's degree from an approved library school. The annual grant carried is \$500.

Class C certificate was allotted to those who took an earlier course at library school for which a degree was not given. This certificate is no longer being granted except in certain unusual circumstances.

These three certificates are recognized in any public library in the province. The *Class E* certificate, however, is for people employed in the smaller libraries.

It is recognized in places of 3500 population or less. It is granted to those who successfully complete a one-month course offered by library school, and it carries an annual grant of \$100.

Regulation 24

This is the most important grant regulation for the free public libraries. Under it the library board is paid an annual grant based on the local tax-levy. The more a community does to support its library service, the larger the grant from the Department. For example, in a place of, say 2500, if the tax-levy amounts to only 50¢ per capita then the Departmental grant is 15% of the amount raised by the local tax. And then on up till, if the local tax-levy is over 80¢ per capita, then the Departmental grant is 60% of that amount. I repeat, all legislative grants to libraries are paid to the board and are to be used for the purpose of improving the library service.

There is also a small grant, not exceeding \$100 on the total purchases of your books, bookbinding, stationery. ~~A small grant is paid on the reading room and another, for the very small libraries, where the annual receipts are too small to enable the library to keep open.~~

The *association libraries* receive a grant equal to the amount they have taken in during the year in membership fees, but with a limit of \$200. Also, if an association library receives a grant from a village, township or county council, the Department makes a grant equal to 50% of the amount, but limited to \$100.

The amount that can be earned in grants by the county libraries has been dealt with on page 28.

Here is an example of how the Regulations work out for one village library. I may as well name it. It is Brussels, in Huron County. This vigorous little library, serves a population of 776.

In 1949 they spent on books	\$187.92
Which earned a grant of	\$ 93.96
Local tax support was at 83¢ per capita	\$650.00
Which earned a grant of	455.00
Their reading room earned	5.00
The librarian holds a Class E certificate	100.00
	<hr/>
Total amount of grant earned.....	\$653.96

Public library service represents a social responsibility which no community can safely avoid. It is the backbone of all education for all people of all ages. Intelligently organized and supported it becomes a strong and essential sinew in the life and thought of the people; and the need for such service, dynamic and progressive, is more urgent to-day than it has ever yet been in the history of man.